

Price, 25 Cents

**PAINE'S
POPULAR PLAYS**

**The Great
Chicken-Stealing
Case
of Squash County**

RICHARDSON

**PAINE PUBLISHING CO.
DAYTON, OHIO**

NO PLAYS EXCHANGED

MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENTS

These songs can be used in all manner of entertainments. The music is easy and both music and words are especially catchy. Children like them. Everybody likes them. Sheet music. Price, 35 cents each.

HERE'S TO THE LAND OF THE STARS AND THE STRIPES. (Bugbee-Worrell.) A patriotic song which every child should know and love. The sentiment is elevating. The music is martial and inspiring. May be effectively sung by the entire school. Suitable for any occasion and may be sung by children or grown-ups. Be the first to use this song in your community.

I'LL NEVER PLAY WITH YOU AGAIN. (Guptill-Weaver.) A quarrel between a small boy and girl. The words are defiant and pert. The boy and his dog have been in mischief, and the small maiden poutingly declares that she will never play with him again, but changes her mind in the last verse. A taking little duet for any occasion, with full directions for motions.

JOLLY FARMER LADS AND LASSIES. (Irish-Lyman.) A decidedly humorous action song prepared especially for district schools. It will make a hit wherever produced.

JOLLY PICKANINNIES. (Worrell.) Introduce this coon song into your next entertainment. If you use the directions for the motions which accompany the music, the pickaninnies will bring down the house. Their black faces and shining eyes will guarantee a "hit." The words are great and the music just right.

LULLABY LANE. (Worrell.) This song is one which the children, once having learned, will never forget. The words have the charm of the verses written by Robert Louis Stevenson. The music is equally sweet and is perfectly suited to the beautiful words. It may be sung as a solo by a little girl with a chorus of other little girls with dolls, or as a closing song by the whole school.

MY OWN AMERICA, I LOVE BUT THEE. (Worrell.) Here is a song that will arouse patriotism in the heart of every one who hears it. The music is so catchy that the children and grown-ups, too, just can't resist it. It makes a capital marching song.

NOW, AREN'T YOU GLAD YOU CAME? (Guptill-Weaver.) This is a closing song which is quite out of the ordinary. There is humor in every line. The music is lively. Your audience will not soon forget this spicy song for it will get many an unexpected laugh. The motions which accompany this song make it doubly effective. For any occasion and for any number of children.

WE ARE CREEPY LITTLE SCARECROWS. (Guptill-Weaver.) A weird, fascinating action song. You can't go wrong with this song. There are four verses and chorus. Complete directions accompany this song so that it may be featured as a song and drill, if desired. For any occasion and for any number of children.

WE'VE JUST ARRIVED FROM BASHFUL TOWN. (Worrell.) This song will bring memories to the listeners of their own bashful school days. They will recall just how "scared" they were when asked to sing or play or speak. The words are unusually clever. The music is decidedly melodious. It makes a capital welcome song or it may be sung at any time on any program with assured success.

WE HOPE YOU'VE BROUGHT YOUR SMILES ALONG. (Worrell.) A welcome song that will at once put the audience in a joyous frame of mind and create a happy impression that will mean half the success of your entire program. Words, bright and inspiring. Music, catchy. A sure hit for your entertainment.

WE'LL NOW HAVE TO SAY GOOD-BYE. (Worrell.) This beautiful song has snap and go that will appeal alike to visitors and singers. It is just the song to send your audience home with happy memories of the occasion.

The Great Chicken-Stealing Case of Squash County

BY
WALTER RICHARDSON

PAINE PUBLISHING COMPANY
DAYTON, OHIO

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CHARACTERS

JERIMIAH JEHOSEPHAT WISEMAN.....The Judge

JULIUS CAESAR LONGFELLOW JOHNSON.....

.....Attorney for Plaintiff

ABRAHAM AUGUSTUS CICERO SMITH.....

.....Attorney for the Defendant

WILLIAM JENNINGS JONTHAN BROWN.....Clerk of Court

WILLIAM HARRISON HENRY TUBBS.....The Sheriff

JAMES CALHOUN EMERSON BONES.....The Defendant

MATILDA MALINDA CUNNINGHAM JONES.....The Plaintiff

Witnesses for the Plaintiff

JOHN MANSFIELD SYLVESTER JONES...Husband of Plaintiff

JAMES FLYNET APPLESEED.....Hired Hand of Plaintiff

Witness for the Defendant

MARTHA WASHINGTON ELIZA BONES.....Negro Minister

Jurors

The number of jurors may be either six or twelve.

DEC 16 1921

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201

COSTUMES

Judge: Thread-bare trousers, swallow-tail coat, powdered hair or wig, large square-rimmed glasses.

Attorney for the Plaintiff: Tuxedo coat and any loud-colored trousers and large red bow tie.

Attorney for the Defendant: Costume similar to the preceding, green bow and loud colored shirt.

Defendant: Costume should be shabby, indicating thriftlessness.

Sheriff: Official-looking uniform, which allows space for padding to make officer appear large; mace and large tin star.

Costumes of all other characters to be appropriate to their respective parts.

STAGE PROPERTIES

Three small tables for attorneys and clerk of court. A desk for judge.

Chairs for judge, attorneys, clerk of court, sheriff, plaintiff, defendant and jurors. Chair placed on platform to serve as witness stand.

Many references books and papers in the case.

Box with chicken feet protruding from the slatted top to represent stolen chicken.

The Great Chicken-Stealing Case of Squash County

Scene: A Courtroom

Discovered in their respective places: Judge; Attorney for Plaintiff; Attorney for the Defendant; Clerk of Court; Sheriff; Plaintiff, and Jury.

JUDGE (*rapping for order*)—Dis heah Co't will now come to awduh! (*To Attorney for Plaintiff.*) Mistah Johnsing, am you ready?

ATTY. FOR P. (*rising*)—Yassuh, yo' Honuh, I is. (*Takes seat.*)

JUDGE (*to Attorney for Defendant*)—Mistah Smith, is you ready?

ATTY. FOR D. (*rising*)—Yassuh, yo' Honuh. (*Takes seat.*)

JUDGE (*to Clerk of Court*)—Mistah Brown, state de case to de Co't.

C. OF C. (*rising and reading in a very loud manner*)—De case ub de state ub Awkansaw, Squash County, Coon Township, against James Calhoun Emerson Bones, defendant, fuh de stealin' ub one fowl, udderwise known as chickun', frum Mrs. Matilda Malinda Cunningham Jones, plaintiff; de said chickun' in question bein' now in de possession ub de Co't. (*Takes seat.*)

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

JUDGE—She'iff, re-pro-duce de prisnuh. (*Sheriff goes out and returns with the defendant, whom he places in chair.*) Ah now awduhs de zamanation ub de witness fuh de plaintiff in dis heah case.

ATTY. FOR P. (*rising*)—Yo' Honuh, John Mansfield Sylvester Jones is mah fust witness.

C. OF C. (*to Sheriff*)—Mistuh Tubbs, per-juce Mistuh John Mansfield Sylvester Jones, de fust witness fuh de plaintiff. (*Sheriff produced the witness in question, and Clerk of Court, holding a book out to him, swears him in thus.*) Lay yo' lef han on de Bible and put yo' right han in de aiah an repeat whut I done says. (*Jones puts right hand on Bible, then realizes his mistake and changes hands.*) Ah do solumly sweah to tell de trufe—

MR. JONES (*looking surprised*)—Ah don't sweah, suh.

C. OF C. (*hotly*)—Who said yo' all must sweah?

JUDGE—Awduh in de Co't! Mr. Jones, de clerk ain't axing yuh to sweah.

MR. JONES (*rising*)—Yo' Honuh, Ah takes hit dat way, an' mah fellins' am pow'fully tramped on.

C. OF C. (*rising*)—Ah begs yo' pawdon, Mistuh Jones, kase I'se only interrogatin' conscarnin' de credibility of yo' highly flavored testificashun.

MR. JONES (*looking wild-eyed*)—Looka heah, niggah, bite dem wurdz up so de Jedge can undahstand whut de means.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

JUDGE (*acting dignified*)—Mistah Jones, de langwedge ob de Clerk am cleah as watah to me. Whut de Clerk am fishin' aftah, am are yo' willin' to tell de trufe in dis heah case.

MR. JONES (*brightening up*)—Oh, dats whut yo' all means, eh? Sho' I'se willin' to tell de trufe. Mah wife knows dat.

ATTY. FOR P. (*to Mr. Jones*)—State yo' name to de Co't, Mistah Jones.

MR. JONES—John Mansfield Sylvester Jones.

ATTY FOR P.—Whut am yo' c'rect age?

MR. JONES—Well, I'se jest ten yeahs oldah den mah wife.

ATTY FOR P.—Whut am de c'rect age ob yo' wife, den?

MR. JONES (*laughing*)—Say, niggah, common hoss sense ought to larn yuh all, dat mah wife is ten yeahs younger den I is, accordin' to mah fust state-munt.

JUDGE (*looking over spectacles*)—Cum to de pint in de cas, gemmen. I awduhs de case to percede.

ATTY. FOR P. (*pointing to witness*)—Now, Mistah Jones, will yo' ansuh direckly whut am yo' c'rect age?

MR. JONES—Yuh means how old I is?

ATTY. FOR P.—Perzackly.

MR. JONES—Ef I libs till dis heah case am finished, I'll be fawty-fibe yeahs old.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

MRS. JONES (*jumping up*)—Niggah, I tole yuh not to tell mah age. (*Starts toward witness.*) I'll break dat brain bowl ob yo's.

MR. JONES (*retreating*)—Looka yeah, little woman; I nevah tole yo'-alls age, Missus, can't dis heah Co't sudge-tract, yuh ignoramas?

JUDGE (*rapping for order*)—Awduh in de Co't. Percede wid de case, Mistah Johnsing.

ATTY. FOR P.—Mistah Jones, does you beliebe dis-heah James Calhoun Emerson Bones, defendant, done stole yo' wife's chickun?

MR. JONES—Yassah, I absolutely does.

ATTY. FOR P.—On whut groun's does yuh beliebe hit?

MR. JONES (*scratches head*)—On mah own groun's, about ten akuhs, I beliebe. (*Jury laughs, and all show amusement.*)

ATTY. FOR P. (*looking disgusted*)—Yuh don't git mah meanin', Mistuh Jones. Whut makes yuh all beliebe dat Mistah Bones, de defendant in dis heah case, done stole yo' wife's chickun?

MR. JONES—Seein' is belieben', ain't hit? Don't Ah knows dis heah Bones when Ah sees him?

ATTY. FOR P. (*to witness*)—Is yuh sho' dat-ah thief, wah Mistah Bones?

MR. JONES—As sho' as de eath habe foah conahs.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

ATTY. FOR P.—How wuz yuh able to distingwitch 'um?

MR. JONES—It wah a pufeckly bright moon-shinny night, an Ah done knows dat-ah Bones fuh fifty-fibe yeahs.

ATTY. FOR D. (*takes witness*)—Is Mitilda Malinda Cun'-ham Jones yo' wife?

MR. JONES—She sho' am, yo' Honuh; an futhuh-mo' she am an angel. She lubs me, Ah knows.

JUDGE (*raps for order*)—Ansuh whut yuh am axed and no mo', Mistah Jones.

ATTY. FOR D.—How ole' did yuh say yuh is?

MR. JONES—Whar wuz yuh when Ah tole de Co't mah age? Ah is fawty-fibe.

ATTY. FOR D.—An' how long hab yuh done say yuh knows Mistuh Bones, de defendant?

MR. JONES—Fuh fifty-fibe yeahs.

ATTY. FOR D.—An' yuh only fawty-fibe, yo' self? Witness perscused. (*Mr. Jones withdraws.*) Ah requests de ebidense be zamined as regahds de age ub Mistuh Jones, and de time he has knowed Mistah Bones.

JUDGE—De Ju'y will zamine de testificashun ub de witness.

ATTY. FOR P.—Mah nex' witness is Mistah James Flynet Appleseed.

C. OF C. (*to Sheriff*)—Mistah Tubbs, pro-juce de witness. (*Mr. Appleseed is sworn in rapidly, thus:*) Do yuh

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

solumly sweah dat yuh will tell de trufe, de whole trufe, and nuttin' but de trufe? So help me.

MR. APPLESEED—Ah sho' does.

ATTY. FOR P.—Den take de witness stan'.

MR. APPLESEED—Ah refuse, suh, it's stealin', besides, we don't need dat-ah chaiah.

ATTY. FOR P. (*looking disgusted*)—Mistuh Appleseed, Ah means fuh yuh to set yo'self down in dat-ah chaiah (*points to chair*), am dat plain enuf'?

MR. APPLESEED (*takes stand*)—Yuh sho' am plain, Mistuh Johnsing.

ATTY. FOR P.—State yo' name to de Co't.

MR. APPLESEED—Mah name am James Flynet Appleseed, ub Coon Township.

ATTY. FOR P.—Whut is yo' ocypation, Mistuh Appleseed?

MR. APPLESEED—Whut's dat?

ATTY. FOR P.—Ah mean, whut does yuh all do fuh a libin'?

MR. APPLESEED—Ah is Miz Mitilda Milinda Cun'ham Jones' hiah'd man.

ATTY. FOR P.—Mistuh Appleseed, whut does yuh know about dis heah chickun stealin' case?

MR. APPLESEED—Which chickun, yo' Honuh?

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

ATTY. FOR P. (*looking puzzled*)—Why, de chickun dat once belonged to Miz Jones, plaintiff, in dis heah case.

MR. APPLESEED—She am sum' chickun, Ah had huh out to de ba'n dance to'other night. Miz Jones sho' has some sweet plum ub a daughtah.

JUDGE—Mistuh Appleseed, de Co't am speakin' ub a chickun ub de fowl fambly.

MR. APPLESEED (*sinking back in chair*)—Oh, den yuh don't mean muh little gal, Missus Eliza Jones?

JUDGE—Sutt'nly not, suh.

ATTY. FOR P.—How many chickuns do Miz Jones habe?

MR. APPLESEED—She has one chickun' yo, Honuh. A large fat juicy hen. (*Jury smacks mouth.*)

ATTY. FOR D. (*rises*)—Yo' Honuh, Ah objects to dat-ah testificashun. It wuks on de Ju'ys sympathy thu' dere stumacks.

JUDGE—Dejections oberruled. Percede wid de case, Mistuh Smith.

ATTY. FOR P.—How ole' is de said chickun in question, Mistuh Appleseed?

MR. APPLESEED—Hit wah two yeah old dis commin' March.

ATTY. FOR D. (*takes witness*)—Whut's yo' name?

MR. APPLESEED—Same as it wuz awhile ago.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

JUDGE—De witness done stated his name to de Co't. Please percede wid de cross an' zamination, Mistuh Smith.

ATTY. FOR D.—Did Ah undahstan' yuh to say Miz Jones, de plaintiff in his heah case, had many chickuns?

MR. APPLESEED—Yassah, she done habe one chickuns, as Ah expopulated befo'.

ATTY. FOR D.—How long has Miz Jones had dis heah fowl in question?

MR. APPLESEED (*scratches head*)—About fo' yeahs and fibe days.

ATTY. FOR D.—An' how ole did yuh say de chickun wuz?

MR. APPLESEED—Two yeahs ole dis comin' March.

ATTY. FOR D.—Witness exchahged. (*Witness withdraws.*) De Co't will notuce de outlandish conflickshun ob ebidence.

JUDGE—Ah now awduhs de zamination ub de witnesses fuh de defendant.

ATTY. FOR D. (*rising*)—Ah calls Miz Martha Washington Eliza Bones as mah fust witness foh de defendant.

C. OF C. (*to Sheriff*)—Mistuh Tubbs, pro-juce Miz Bones. (*Witness sworn in, and placed in chair.*)

ATTY. FOR D. (*to Mrs. Bones*)—Whut's yo' name, Ma'am?

MRS. BONES—Miz Martha Washington Bones.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

ATTY. FOR D.—Am Mistuh Calhoun Emerson Bones yo' husban'?

MRS. BONES—Yassah, Mistah Bones am mah deah ol' husban'.

ATTY. FOR D.—Miz Bones, whut am de cha'actuh ub yo' husban'?

MRS. BONES—He am de bes' man in Squash County, ain't yuh, Sweetums? (*Points to her husband, who registers glee.*)

ATTY. FOR D.—Am yo' ole man fond of chickun?

MRS. BONES—He sho' is, yo' Honuh.

ATTY. FOR D.—Would yo' husban's stumick cause him to steal to satisfy his appatight?

MRS. BONES—No-suh, yo' Honuh, dat-ah man am too religus fuh dat.

ATTY. FOR P. (*takes witness*)—Whut chuch does yo' ole man attend, Miz Bones?

MRS. BONES—None, yo' Honuh, he's jes' natchully religus.

ATTY. FOR D. (*jumping up*)—Yo' Honuh, Ah subjects to dat-ah question.

JUDGE—State yo' subjections, Mistuh Smith.

ATTY. FOR D.—De constitution don say a man shall habe free religus exersize thereof.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

JUDGE—Subjections upheld. Percede wid de case.

ATTY. FOR P. (*to witness*)—Has yo' ole man got any chickuns?

MRS. BONES—Yassuh, one fat hen.

ATTY. FOR P.—How long has yuh had dis heah hen?

MRS. BONES—About fibe yeahs, suh.

ATTY. FOR P.—Whah did yuh git dis heah hen in question?

MRS. BONES—Ah done bought her frum Miz Jones about two yeahs ago.

ATTY. FOR P.—Am dat a fact?

MRS. BONES—Hit sho' am, yo' Honuh.

MRS. JONES (*jumping up*)—Dat am a lie. Ah only had one chickun, an' Ah's still got hit.

JUDGE (*looking perplexed*)—Miz Jones, yuh are turribly fo'getful of yo'self. De Co't am tryin' Mistah Bones fuh de stealin' ub yo' chickun; derefo', accordin' to statutes, yuh hain't got no chickun.

ATTY. FOR P.—Witness discussed. (*Mrs. Bones withdraws.*) De Co't will oberlook de statement ub my client, Miz Jones. She am all upsot.

MRS. JONES—Bless 'em ole soul. He knows Ah needs rest.

ATTY. FOR D.—Mah nex' witness fuh de defendant am de Rev. Ebernezah Sidebu'ns.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

C. OF C.—Mistuh Tubbs, pro-juce de Rev. Ebernezah Sidebu'ns, nex' witness fuh de defendant. (*Witness produced and sworn in as customary.*)

ATTY. FOR D. (*to witness*)—Whut am yo' name?

REV. SIDEBURNS (*looking very devout*)—Rev. Ebernezah Sidebu'ns, Pastah ub de Colored Baptist Chuch ub Squash County, Coon Township.

JUDGE (*kindly*)—Jes' ansuh whut is axed yuh, pahson.

ATTY. FOR D.—Does yuh all know Mistuh Bones, de defendant in dis heah case?

REV. S.—Ah sho' does. Brothuh Bones am a fine man.

ATTY. FOR D.—Whut does yuh all know about Mistuh Bones cha'actuh?

REV. S.—Brothuh Bones am a fine cha'actuh, I holds 'im up to mah Sunday skull class ebery Sunday. Ay, verily.

ATTY. FOR P.—No wondah dey nevah sees heaben. (*All show amusement.*)

JUDGE—No slandarus rema'ks, Mistuh Johnsing.

ATTY. FOR D.—Was yuh ever in Mistuh Bones' house?

REV. S.—Ah sho' wuz, many a time.

ATTY. FOR D.—Witness discussed. (*Rev. S. withdraws.*) Yo' Honuh, dis completes mah zamination.

ATTY. FOR P. (*rising*)—Jes' a minute, Rev Sidebu'ns. (*Rev. Sideburns goes back to chair.*) I wants to ax yuh a few cross-questions.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

REV. S.—All right, Brothuh Johnsing, but why cross-questions? Be kind. Ay, verily.

ATTY. FOR P.—Did dis heah Mistuh Bones, defendant in dis case, eber 'tend chuch?

REV. S.—Yassuh, once.

ATTY. FOR P.—An' when wuz dat?

REV. S.—De day we had de community dinnah. Ay, verily, dat wah a fine dinnah.

ATTY. FOR P.—Wah yuh ever over to Bones' house fuh a meal?

REV. S.—Ah sho' wah, an' Brothuh Bones sho' had some fine dinnah.

ATTY. FOR P.—Whut kind of meat did Mistuh Bones have fuh dinnah?

REV. S.—Ah's not suah, but Ah do beliebe it wah chickun.

ATTY. FOR P.—Whah did Mistuh Bones git dis chickun?

REV. S. (*looking worried*)—Ah nevah axed him 'kase Mistuh Bones don't ax me whah Ah gits mah sermons.

ATTY. FOR P.—Witness exchahged. (*Rev. S. withdraws.*) Yo' Honuh, dis completes mah zamination of witnesses.

JUDGE (*to Attorney for Plaintiff*)—Ah now awdahs yo' plea, Mistuh Johnsing.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

ATTY. FOR P. (*rising and addressing Judge*)—Yo' Honuh, Ah, Julius Caesar Longfellow Johnsing, Attuny fuh de Plaintiff, Miz Matilda Malinda Cun'ham Jones, now wishes to draw yo' 'tention to a few facks in dis heah case. How would yuh all like to spen' many days takin' keah ub a nice chickun and den habe sum low-down niggah come along an' steal hit? Miz Bones an' huh husban' am hahd-wucking people an' de loss ub dis heah fowl mean a mighty lot to dem. Fum de looks of dem, yuh would t'ink dey was prosperous, but dey ain't. Considah, den whut de stealin' ub dis heah fowl mus' hab meant to dem. Futhuhmo', de Bible done recawd, some whah in de book ub Epidox, de fiteent vuss, dat "Thou shalt not steal." Ef Mistuh Bones am sech a religus man as his ole 'oman done testified, why den, tell me, don't he read and love accawdingly? No suh, dis heah Bones ain't eny mo' chuch member den Ah is. He's like all de rest ub de niggahs, muhself per-cluded, he uses de chuch as a camoflodge to covah ub his scandalous deeds. De berry fack dat he went to de chuch dinnah, as testified by Rev. Sidebu'ns, shows he lubs chickun. I know dey had chickun at dat-ah dinnah, 'kase no niggah's feast am complete widout 'possum or chickun. (*Jury smacks mouth.*) Beah in min' dat de only time Mistuh Bones was in chuch, gemmen ub de Ju'y, wuz when de chuch served a la'ge chickun dinnah. Dat proved dat de only religion Mistuh Bones eber had went to his stumick. Now dis is not my statemunt, but de pahson's, and yuh all knows de pahson am a man ub high ideals, eben if he is a witness fuh de

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

defendant. Futhuhmo', de pahson, who yuh all know by dis time, is Rev. Ebernezah Sidebu'ns, done say he took dinnah at Mistuh Bone's house.

He futhuhmo' declaahed dat chickun wuz served. Whah did Mistuh Bones git dis chickun? Ah ax yuh? His ole 'oman say she bought hit frum Miz Jones, my client, but yuh all knows dat when a niggah buys enything, he does it atter da'k an' fo'gits to leab de money.

MR. BONES—Dat am a lie.

MRS. BONES—Ah say it am. Mah ole man steals his chickuns hones'ly. (*All show surprise.*)

JUDGE (*rapping*)—Awduh! Percede, Mistuh Johnsing.

ATTY. FOR P. (*proceeds*)—Now, gemmen ub de Ju'y, Ah calls yo' 'tention to Miz Jones, plaintiff in des-heah case. Behold huh! (*Mrs. Jones weeps loudly.*) A few days befo' dis scandlous theft she wah as faih as a bloomin' lily, as high-spirited as a Kaintucky hoss and as lively as a cricket—but now look at huh. (*Dramatic gesture.*) Oh, Ah jess ax yuh to look at huh! Behold, the lily has lost hits faihness, de spirit am gone. She am prackly lifeless. Why? De reason am plain enuf—a stolen chickun! Gemmen ub de Ju'y, yo' all knows how deah to us niggahs am de sound ub chickun. So place yo'self in Miz Jones' shoes and t'ink as she t'inks. Ah neber tries to wuck ub de Ju'ys sym'thies as de attunny fuh de defendant does. He puts ub a pitiful mouf to de Ju'y. Now fuh de proof Ah's got. Didn't Mistuh Appleseed, de hiah'd han' of Miz Jones,

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

plaintiff in dis-heah case, testify dat Miz Jones had one chickun, a big, fat, juicy hen? Deahfo' ain't dat proof dat Miz Jones had a chickun? Now Mistuh Appleseed am a truthful man or Miz Jones would fiah him. An' den didn't Mistuh Jones, husban' ub Miz Jones, declaah he saw Mistuh Bones, defendant in dis heah case, steal de said chickun?

Ain't dat proof enuf' to send Mistuh Bones to de rock pile? Bot' Mistuh Appleseed an' Mistuh Jones am above repro'ch. Deahfo' dere words am law an' gospel. Now, in conclusion, Ah ax yuh, Hon'able Jedges, to put yo'sefs in de position ub de plaintiff, Miz Jones, an' see how yuh would feel. Gemmen ub de Ju'y, dis heah completes mah plea an' once mo' Ah ax yo' all to considah de facts as Ah habe presented dem. Ah also ax no mercy fo' dat low-down niggah, Mistuh Bones. (*Takes seat, mopping brow.*)

JUDGE—Ah now awduhs de attunny fo' de defendant to give his plea.

ATTY. FOR D. (*bowing gracefully to Judge and Jury*)—Yo' Honuh, gemmen ub de Ju'y, Ah's pos-tib dat Mistuh Bones (*indicating defendant with dramatic gesture*) am completely innuhcent ub dis grabe chahge brung against him by Miz Matilda Malinda Cun'ham Jones, State of Awkansas Squash County, Coon Township. Ah's convinced 'kase ub mah own knowledge an' dat which Ah done secu'd fum de testifications ub de witnesses, dat Mistuh Bones am entiahly innuhcent. Now, gemmen ub de Ju'y, ef yo' alls followed dis heah case keahf'ly, dey ain't no question in mah min' but whut yo' all will declaah Mistuh Bones in-

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

nuhcent. Now, gemmen ub de Ju'y, Ah ax yo' all to focus yo' lamps on Mistuh Bones. Look at him! Ah ax yuh sittin' dere, innuhcent as a chil,' not a trace ub crime does yo' all see in dat hon'st face. Why, gemmen, hit's beyon' mah powuhs ub comperhennsion to eben dream ub Mistuh Bones bein' guilty. Now, Hon'able Jedges, jess lemme tell yo' all a few t'ings dat transiahed in dis heah testifications. (*Two of the jurors fall asleep and remain so throughout the remainder of the plea.*) Dat-ah Mistuh Jones, who hum'ly admits he am de husban' ub Miz Jones, plaintiff in dis heah case, say dat de night Mistuh Bones took de chickun wah a moonlight night.

Well, de Doctuh Pill's almanac say distinckly dat de said night in question wah a berry dahk night wid no moon in de skies. Now, Ah ax yuh, gemmen ub de Ju'y, how wuz Mistuh Jones gonna distingwitch one nigguh out-uh a million in a night like dat? Futhuhmo', Mistuh Bones, de defendant fuh fifty-fibe yeahs—upon cross an' zamination he, Mistuh Bones, gives his age as fawty-fibe. How, gemmen ub de Ju'y, can dis heah be possibule? Ef yo' all is doin' yo duty like Ah hopes yuh is, sech outlandish conflicksion of testifications will not pass yo' intelligunt min's widout grabe consideration. Now, consunnin' de cha'actul ub Mistuh Appleseed, hiah'd han' an' witness fuh de plaintiff. Dat-ah niggah actu'lly tho't dat when de Co't wah speakin' chickun, hit wah referrin' to Miz Jones' gal. Ain't dat scandalous to t'ink Miz Jones would allow dat-ah low-down niggah to drag huh daughtah's name in de dust by

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

comparin' huh wid a two-legged fowl? Den, again, gemmen ub de Ju'y, ef yo' all will look into de Co'thouse recawds yuh'll find dat Mistuh Appleseed's lease on one ub de cells ub de jail wuz up jes a few mon'ts ago. Whut fuh? Fuh stealin' sheep! Deahfo,' Mistuh Ju'uhs, yo' all cain't comply upon dis heah nigguh's testification. Last, but not least, Ah want to draw yo' 'tention to de testifications ub de Rev. Ebernezah Sidebu'ns, whose chance ub gettin' a pa'h ub wings an' a ha'p am a settled fack.

REV. SIDEBURNS—Yo' all has de same chance as Ah does, Brothuh Smith. Ay, verily.

ATTY. FOR D.—Now, de pahson done say Mistuh Bones am fine man; an' de Lawd only knows de pahson won't lie.

REV. SIDEBURNS—Nevah, Brothuh Smith. Ay, verily.

ATTY. FOR D.—Now then, gemmen ub de Ju'y, ef de pahson t'inks so much ub Mistuh Bones dat he presents him as an objeck lesson to his Sunday schule class, why drag his unstained name in de dust? Anseh me dat? Ah say. Den Miz Bones, de defendant's wife done say pracktick'lly whut de Ju'y ef yo' alls done follow dis heah case keahf'ly which Ah hopes yuh has, yuh'll decide dat Mistuh Bones am entiahly innuhcent ub dis heah grabe chahge. (*Takes seat.*)

JUDGE (*rising*)—Gemmen ub de Ju'y, mah perstructions to yo' all am gonna be berry brief. Ah persume, yo' alls done heah de spendid ahgymentations ub dese learn'd at-tunneys and de testifications ub dis heah witnesses an' yuh's

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

zamed de ebidence. As de gua'dean ob dis heah Co't, Ah want yo' all to weigh dis heah ahgymentations and testifications berry keahf'ly in yo' min's an' tell whedduh yuh t'inks dis heah James Cal'oun Emerson Bones am guilty aw not guilty. Ah ax's yuh to be speedy an' faah in yo' decision. Ef Mistuh Bones is declaahed guilty he faces a prison tum uf fum th'ee mont's to fo' yeahs—so say de fawty-fo'th section ub de law ub Awkinsaw. Now, gemmen ub de Ju'y, Ah ax's yo' all to considuh dese facks an' act accawdin'ly. So now Ah dismisses yo' all in awduh dat yuh can make yo' decision.

(Jurors retire, with the exception of one of the sleeping members, who continues to snore until one of the others returns to courtroom, awakens him, and takes him out, stretching and yawning.)

Enter Juror

JUROR—Yo' Honuh, hit is necessary fuh de Ju'y to have de chickun fuh a few moments, to zamine hit, in awduh to detummin' de trufe ub de testifications.

MR. BONES (*excitedly*)—Yo' Honuh, no tellin' whut dat Ju'y will do wid dat-ah chickun. Chickuns am hahd to git.

ATTY. FOR D. (*surprised*)—Cam' yo'self, Mistuh Bones. De Co't will take care ub dat chickun.

JUDGE (*to Sheriff*)—Mistuh Tubbs, take de chickun in to de Ju'y—also bring de fowl back wid yuh.

SHERIFF—Yassuh, Ah sho' will, yo' Honuh.

THE GREAT CHICKEN-STEALING CASE.

Enter Jurors, taking seats

JUDGE—De fo'hman ub de Ju'y will now repo't de vud-dick.

FOREMAN OF JURY—Yo' Honuh, aftuh a lengthy delibuh-ations, we done decided dat dis heah Mistuh Bones am irregahdlessly, unanimously, an' widout any constrictions whatsoebbuh, entiahly innuhcent.

JUDGE—Mistuh Bones, yuh is heahby irregahdlessly, unanimously, an' widout any constrictions whatsoebbuh, duly equitted.

MR. BONES (*looking frightened*)—Yo' Honuh, whut—wh—whut's all dat mean?

JUDGE—Yuh po' innuhcent lookin' nigguh, yuh, dat mean yuh ain't guilty. Hit means dat yuh is free, dat yuh didn't take Miz Jones' chickun.

MR. BONES—Den Ah can keep de chickun dat Ah stole?
(*Judge falls off chair, while jury shows great amusement. Actors may group themselves together and sing any appropriate song, or curtain may be dropped, whichever is preferred.*)

CURTAIN

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